

THE MORALIST.

*Justum bellum quibus necessarium, et pia arma,
quibus nulla, nisi in armis, relinquitur spes—*

“Oh! tis our COUNTRY calls! whose claim should
meet

“An *Echo* in the soul's most deep retreat,

“Along the heart's responding string should run

“Nor let a tone there vibrate—but the one.”

No. 11.

MONDAY, NOV. 7, 1814.

As soon as the English had astonished the nation by taking our Capital, every body began to think it high time to do something towards defending the country against invasion. It seemed as if the nation had been in a deep sleep, and that something had suddenly roused it, as we do a land-turtle, by putting a red hot coal of fire on its back. And amid the real or affected gloom that pervaded all countenances it was not a little amusing to see the various and curious ways in which patriotism began to sprout up, and display itself among people, who, before that event, were supposed to be without it.

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My printers for instance are divided in their politics, for one is a federalist and the other a democrat, and although heretofore they have neither of them done any thing for the Nation, but argue and wrangle with one another about government; yet no sooner had the British entered Washington than they both ceased to talk, shouldered their muskets and, like good patriots, swore vengeance against our barbarous Invaders. The effect has been the same on every class of people in the Nation, and it is a consoling proof that the Union is so much dearer to every American than even party tenets, that the latter will always be forgotten the moment the former is in danger. The absence of our Printers has occasioned the *Moralist* to lay by his pen for the last few weeks, and he now assumes it again for the same purposes and with the same associates as before.

Being of the number who have determined that if the invader shall dare to set his foot on this Island, he shall pay dearly for it; I have in common with my fellow citizens volunteered my services for the City's defence, and more than once have I tired my limbs and blistered my hands in the cause of my country at Brooklyn heights. I am a member of that Corps which had the honor of first breaking ground, and I saw the gallant Captain Bremner of the Artillery, when in spite of all opposition he

boldly planted the American colors on the top of Fort Green and come safely off without any material injury, excepting a small contusion on the side of his nose. That was a memorable day, and I wish to make it immortal by handing it down to the remotest posterity. General Swift, with all the fire and zeal of a truly good officer first mounted the ramparts, and he was shortly after, followed by Major General Lewis, who in his ardour to push the victory as far as possible, most unfortunately dirtied his boots, so that he was compelled to haul off and use his white handkerchief to repair damages. He is a noble officer and deserves well of his country, and I would recommend him for promotion, but as our Generals say, where all do their duty it is needless to be particular.

The day was uncommonly pleasant, and our labouring detachment which consisted of five hundred and upwards, was composed of all parties without regard to politics, and all trades and occupations without regard to distinctions. It is one of the happiest effects of patriotism that it elevates the most humble to a rank with the most exalted, and puts a dead stop to all political persecutions. It is in a nation what reason is in the human mind; it puts out the eyes of prejudice and opens the way for truth; the little dirty artifices of ignorance vanish before it, and all contracted, illiberal,

and malignant passions, give place to exalted—noble and dignified feelings. I wish from my heart there was more of it in the land, for I really think it would make us not only a better, but a happier people.

Our party assembled at sunrise in the Park, and marched in procession to Beekman slip. The pandean band, which plays on all occasions, led the way; and when the Steam-boat started from the wharf the Citizens honored us with three hearty cheers, which we returned, while the band played the National song of Yankee Doodle. The Committee of defence preceded us; and when we arrived at the ground, we fired a National salute, as a proof that we could spend some powder in self defence; while every man seized a spade to show that we had rather dig the earth than loose our liberties. My hands are not much accustomed to hard labor, and my frame is not now as well adapted to fatigue as it was in the days of my youth; nevertheless, I threw off my coat, determined at least to do something for the immediate defence of one of the proudest Cities of the proudest Country in the world. And where is the base and ungrateful American who feeds on the bounty and enjoys the privileges of this happiest of all governments, and yet will not assist her in this hour of trial? I lay it down as a maxim, that no American who

takes a view of the city and harbour of New-York, and the rich scenery of its neighbourhood, from Brooklyn heights, can help loving his country and rejoicing in the beauties of the land. And if any man finds himself falling into the disease of a mal-content, and under the influence of that most abominable epidemic, begins to feel the symptoms of a loyal attachment to some other clime, let him take a walk to those heights, and gaze awhile on the fertility of the surrounding country as it smiles under the influence of the summer sun. There are some men who hate every thing and enjoy nothing; they are always grumbling and groaning, and prognosticating horrible things. It is unpleasant to be in the neighborhood of such a being, and I always look upon it as a misfortune if a man of this cast perchance falls into my company. One of that character happened to be of our party, and he was, to the enthusiasm of those around him, just like frost to a flower—he nipped feeling in the bud, and he seemed like a cloud to the fancy, for he kept the very sun from shining on it. He could see nothing in the scene but the gun-boats—and the dismantled shipping—the salt marshes—and the dusty road that leads to Newton. Governor's Island, he said, was a great obstruction to commerce, and he thought it a pity that Corlaers Hook was not out of the way, for it forms such a violent current that he is very much afraid it will

one day undermine and carry away the town of Brooklyn. He disliked Steam-boats, because they hurt the pockets of the Albany skippers; and he could not forgive himself for having crossed the river in the *NASSAU*, because the watermen who ply in the little boats are nearly ruined by this new kind of conveyance. I was very glad to get out of his way, and to incline a little towards my friend, Alderman De Ruyter, who was one of the party, and who having fought at the battle of Brooklyn was able to amuse us with several anecdotes of the war. He, like myself, had laid aside his coat, and the heat, together with fatigue, had given to his face the color of scarlet, but he was in fine spirits, and he pointed to a little old house at a short distance off, saying, "that was the place where *GENERAL WASHINGTON* used, when the army was at Brooklyn, to go and refresh himself with milk and hoe cakes, a dish which he always eat with great delight." The Alderman compared him to *Curius Dentatus* who was a great General, very fond of eating raw-turnips—and he asserted that if our modern Generals would drink less wine and eat more pudding they would stand a better chance to whip the English. It is certain that temperance is a noble quality in a general, and he who loves the luxuries of the table, the fopperies of dress, and the indulgencies of the pillow, is not worthy to command at

such a post as New-York or any other post of importance.

Our party worked with great zeal for the first hour, but before twelve o'clock there was excited a very general sympathy for the hands and muscles of the arms, and even our patriotism began to flag amazingly, so that I could not but observe the joy with which every man heard the drum beat for dinner. In the afternoon we were honored with the company of many ladies who had an opportunity of displaying their plumes and pretty figures to very great advantage from the top of the old ramparts. Their robes waved in the wind—they smiled on the patriotic diggers—the musical band played national airs—the tents resounded with the noise of joy and even my friend the Grumbler was obliged to acknowledge that a day spent at Brooklyn heights is a day of mirth and festivity. For my own part I was particularly pleased when I saw Alderman De Ruyter shake hands with Alderman Buckmaster, and afterwards walk with him arm in arm in the procession homewards. It is several years since those Gentlemen began to look askance at each other, and it was only a few days past I heard De Rayter drop a hint that if there had not been a little shuffling in the upper wards he might have had Buckmaster's place in the Corporation and perhaps, the honor of being a member of the Commit-

tee of Defence. I attribute this restoration of amity between the two worthies, wholly to the late disaster at Washington, for I think nothing is more apt to make men forget their little foolish party differences than a great national calamity, which, like adversity humbles pride, enlarges the mind, and opens the eyes to a perception of truth

On my way home I stopped at the Encampment of the country militia, back of Brooklyn. They appeared to bear the hardships of the "tented field," with fortitude, although some of them put on wry faces, and complained that they endured more than their proportion of the trials of war. I could not help listening to the murmurs of several of the soldiers who assured me that their families were numerous and that they and their little fortunes would be ruined in consequence of their cattle and their farms being wholly deserted. There seems to be great injustice in the unequal pressure of the war—and the wisdom as well as humanity of government ought to provide against this crying evil. A rich single man, worth a million of dollars, whose life is so worthless that he might die without being missed in the community, will pay a contemptible fine, and so avoid the duties of a soldier; but the poor man, whose destiny denies him the power to pay that fine, is forced into camp, and his family are deserted; perhaps, abandoned to all

the horrors of want, winter and starvation. Thus it is that Government, the end of which is to protect the feeble against the powerful, only strengthens the strong and weakens the weak. The state of New-York, however, by the recommendation of one of the most philanthropic and active Governors in the Union, has enacted a law that will probably mitigate if not remedy the evil ; but until that law goes into operation, the sufferings of those soldiers whom the war has exiled from home, and driven to this city to defend us from destruction, have a powerful claim, on the gratitude, the charity, and especially on the *justice* of our Citizens. If the horrors of Washington have not been reacted in our City, and if we have not heard the shrieks of our wives and children, and seen them flying in terror from the smoking temples and ruined dwellings of our State Capital, it is owing to that body of soldiers, who have left their own homes to defend ours. While they keep watch for us in the night and through the storm, and testify a willingness to encounter fatigue, hunger and battle for our safety, what may they not ask ? and what ought we not to give to soften the hardships of their wretched condition ? He who coldly shuts his door and his heart, and turns his back with indifference on those faithful centinels who throughout a raging and tempestuous night de-

send his house and his person from danger, is a being destitute of some of the finest feelings that do honor to human nature.

Such were some of my reflections on witnessing the patient sufferings of a militia camp. I went the other evening to Baker's, in Wall-street, where a number of very worthy gentlemen are in the habit of assembling together to smoke and settle the affairs of the nation. I found my friend, the Grumbletonian, there, and he was railing away against the extravagance of the age, and especially against the shameful generosity which has been displayed by the monied interests of our city to aid fortifications and relieve the distresses of our militia. My friend has a fat red face, with a goodly corporation, and a voice like thunder. He undertook to account for the scarcity of money, by proving that the Banks had nearly ruined themselves by giving two hundred and fifty dollars to the Committee of Defence, and that one of our greatest capitalists had lately failed, in consequence of his having presented the soldiers with a cart load of squashes. "No silver," said he, "to be seen—Banks can't pay their own notes—their generosity has ruined the state—commercial credit all gone—Corporation goes upon tick—the world is mad, and the United States will be ruin-

ed. if people throw away their property to defend it—better let the British come and take it at once—as they did at Alexandria!” “Yes,” said a plain-looking elderly man, who listened to the talk, “and as they most certainly will do *here*, if patriotism does not immediately get the better of avarice, and shame some of our stingy coach-and-six gentlemen to put their hands in their pockets to help their insulted country in this hour of distress.” The Grumbletonian was about to reply, but discovering an expression of considerable firmness, and something like a rising storm in the countenance of the plain gentleman, he pouted his lip, put on a sullen air, whistled, and walked out of the room in a great hurry, and I was happy to learn, after his departure, that he was only an American—by naturalization.

I had just sent the foregoing essay to the printers, and was comfortably seated in my elbow chair, when Sir Harry Loiter came into my study and begged me to publish the following account of the Ugly Club. It seems he has lately been honored with a seat in that celebrated association of which he was notified by the following polite, and most flattering letter—that was

accompanied with an old tin box, containing the freedom of the Society.

SIR,

On account of your extreme merit in possessing a most beautiful ugly face, we have deemed you worthy of the honor of being elected an honorary member of the Ugly Club. If you doubt that your countenance is not deformed in the handsomest manner imaginable, we beg leave to refer you to your daily friend, whom yet you have never caught in a lie, and that is, sir—your Mirror.

Your's, with great respect,

HIS UGLINESS.

On my turning round to Sir Harry, he assumed one of his queer quizzical looks, and laughing most heartily in my face, informed me that the Club was made up of some of the handsomest fellows in town; nay, that several of the Iron Greys had joined the fraternity, and that no body of men had equalled them for grace and personal beauty in the estimation of the Ladies at Brooklyn Heights, where they particularly distinguished themselves by their skill in digging and—huzzaing. Their institution seems to have for its object, not to console and support each other under their natural deformities, but to amuse each other by assuming artificial deformities of countenance and figure. One there-

fore turns his mouth upwards on the right, another turns it upwards on the left—one squints and looks quizzical—one looks stupid—another fierce—one grins and looks silly, and another pouts and looks very wise. Thus when you enter the room where their Society has assembled, you appear to be surrounded by a parcel of living caricatures resembling the pictures hung up in a barbers window. But “said Sir Harry, I must not disclose too much at present; at some future time you shall know more; let it suffice to say, that they are a pleasant, merry set of whole soul’d fellows, who would sooner do almost any thing than injure the cause either of patriotism, morality or fun.

From the pen of Sir Harry Loiter.

I have often amused myself by watching the various places of public resort in the city of New-York, and observing the different characters of the people who attend them. The manners and even the personal appearances of the men of one nation, do not differ more widely from those of another, than the manners and appearances of Washington Hall from those of the Coffee House. About the former you may discover the character of a gazer—a lounge—an eater or drinker, a traveller and an

idler. About the latter such characters would be out of their element—hence, all is noise, bustle, activity, hurly-burly and business—about the former you may see gigs, coaches and horses—about the latter, rum puncheons, tobacco hogsheads, sugar and molasses. In Broadway I fancy myself a traveller in the empire of pleasure, and I study the manners, customs and habits of her sons and daughters—In Wall street I find myself in the Kingdom of Commerce, among a people whose language, looks, and actions are every way different. I consider the different Hotels as different districts, producing different commodities. If you want Madeira go to Crocker's—if Punch go to Gibson's—go to Baker's for Brandy and water, and to Tammany Hall for the best of Beer. You find the army at one place—the navy at another—here the Merchants—there the quidnuncs. In fine the city is but a little abridgment of a world—divided into Nations and Districts exhibiting various people in various forms, and affording all sorts of natural and artificial productions.

The other evening I was traveling within the boundaries of Baker's empire, in Wall-street, and being disposed to look a little minutely into the manners of his people, I walked into his capital, and was happy to find, among other assemblages of high note from various quarters, that there was

a congress of the Ugly Club, into which I had lately been admitted an honorary member, after the manner in which Jefferson and Madison had been admitted members of the French National Society. I was an object of great attention among them, and I found them very inquisitive about the news of the day—the state of the weather—the events of the war—and the prospects of brandy and superfine cloths becoming very high. From all this I conclude that the Americans generally, have as much curiosity as the English, notwithstanding the philosophic opinion of the learned London Editors to the contrary. When I informed them that a renowned Editor of a London Magazine had lately expressed a doubt, whether curiosity was a passion that existed in an American bosom, they seemed very much to lament that any country should be cursed with lying and ignorant Editors; and one of them observed he thought it the greatest curse that could befall a nation. Another replied he did not think it as bad as a corrupt and talking parliament. And hereupon there arose a debate which of the two aforesaid evils was the greatest.

The affirmant asserted that a corrupt and talking parliament ruins the character of a nation abroad, and renders miserable the condition of its

people at home ; and among the unhappy effects of its wretched policy, we may count—the desperate waste of public revenue—consequent want of national credit—the distrust of monied men—a want of confidence among the soldiers and sailors—divisions and factions among the citizens—embarrassment—debt—disaster—defeat—loss of freedom—civil war—massacres—revolutions—anarchy and a want of confidence in a representative government.

On the other hand it was insisted, that it is doubtful whether those evils can be attributed wholly to the corrupt and talking parliament, and even admitting otherwise, a corrupt and talking parliament owes its origin and support to lying Editors, who in return owe their origin and support to the parliament. Thus are those monsters

“ Born of themselves, each other's Father, Mother,
Begot and nourished but by one another.”

After considerable debate on the question, it was finally determined that a corrupt parliament was death to the liberty—as a corrupt Editor is poison to the morals of a nation, and it was further agreed that England was sorely afflicted with both those evils—and America either with those or some-

thing very much like them, and that was thought to be one reason why the two countries are at war—The same disorder operating much alike in the two patients.

The President of the club, who is a very sage man not only in the opinion of several of the club, but even his own, says he has a plan to cure the nation of its complaints. He proposes to turn all the members of Congress into the army, and to give the helm of government to the ladies, for he thinks they will talk less and do more than our representatives, and whatever they do will be praised by the Editors out of pure gallantry, so that the government will be energetic, and the Union will be secured forever.

The above plan seemed to meet with universal approbation—their uglinesses shewed their teeth from one corner of the room to the other, and I have since heard that their plan is so well understood that they have already brought over the Society for the promotion of Industry to their side—and they have not only appropriated a hundred dollars for the furtherance of their object—but they have defined each others rights in a compact, by which the ladies admit that the club is ugly and patriotic—and the club acknowledge the ladies are pretty.